THE AMERICAN

RATIONALIST

November 1957

VOL. 2 • No. 4

UR POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY *is best expressed by Alexander Pope in his "Essay on Man": Know then thyself. Presume not God to scan, the proper study of mankind is man."*

EGATIVELY, *we stand with Jefferson, eternally hostile to all forms of tyranny over the inds of men.*

- **WHAT IS RATIONALISM?**
  an Editorial
- **RATIONALISM DEFINED**
  by John H. Latta
- **THE HUMANIST BASIS OF MORALS**
  by Alvan L. Davis
- **THE DILEMMA OF LIBERALISM**
  by Bruce L. Melvin
- **RELIGION AND THE ARMY BRITISH**
  by Dave Shipper
- **RELIGION AND THE ARMY U.S.A.**
  by John L. Standish
- **COOPERATION**
  by Ira S. Cardiff
- **WHAT A FREETHINKER THINKS**
  by James Hervey Johnson

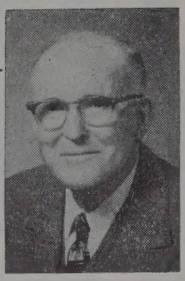
A Magazine for the Entire Rationalist Movement

35c

NEWS OF THE MOVEMENT . . . BOOKS . . . COMMENTS

an editorial . . .

WHAT IS RATIONALISM?



A. B. HEWSON

To us, Rationalism is a method of approach to the realities of Life from a scientific base.

It is not a philosophy in itself. It is simply the means whereby each individual may develop a satisfying personal philosophy for himself. These individual philosophies may differ in detail according to the varying combinations of circumstance which make up the experiential background of each person. Nevertheless, they all will remain sufficiently alike for wholehearted co-operation between open-minded individuals holding to them and should generate a strong sense of togetherness.

The Rationalist approach can be most rewarding to the well integrated adult. However, to garner these rewards he must have an imagination that is under the firm discipline of a mind which has developed a capacity for evaluating the facts which present themselves.

After thrusting aside all the fantasies that have been woven, the crude hypotheses, the uninformed speculations and theorising of primitive minds which have been handed down from the childhood of the race, a Rationalist finds himself confronted with but one fundamental, basic fact of which he may be sure. He knows only that he is here on this, the planet, Earth. That is the sum total of his knowledge. Beyond that, he finds himself before a seemingly impenetrable barrier, which, so far, has successfully guarded the answers to the riddle of human existence and its purposes. Like Dr. Cook, who falsely claimed to have climbed Mt. McKinley and to have discovered the North Pole, many have claimed to have surmounted the barrier and found the right answers but all have been as false as Dr. Cook's.

A person matures under the impact of his study, his observations and his daily personal experiences. In the process, if he is alert of mind, he learns many things. For example, he finds that the principles of morality

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the pic on the cover

Five visitors to Philadelphia take time out during the convention of the American Rationalist Federation to see the historic places of interest. Standing before the Betsy Ross home are, from left to right, Sam Hill of St. Louis; Boyd Wamack, president of the Federation, also from St. Louis; H. L. Watt from Milwaukee; Joseph Braun from Chicago; and James Kaigler of St. Louis, Treasurer of the Federation.

•

Greetings!

TO THE AMERICAN RATIONALIST

Oskar Hauske
George M. Fleming
Ben Bereskin
Emor L. Cartwright
Roberta Amama
Mike Dvorshak
Arthur J. Rehor
Calvin M. Reisland
Mary R. Schultz
Joseph J. Costanga
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and ethics which have become more or less accepted standards of our society, have been wrought out of the bitter trial and error of humanity over many centuries in its efforts to work out a pattern for intelligent harmonious group-living. How much has been added to their structure by clerical preachments is highly debatable.

The maturing individual learns also that the orthodox religious institutions, ostensibly designed to serve him, in reality largely have served, instead, those whose interest it was to thwart the development of Man's awareness of his own inherent powers. They have placed their great emphasis always upon Man's utter dependence upon some great mysterious Deity and upon Man's great need to pray to that great Deity for powers which, in the nature of things, he already possesses.

Those sensitive to reality through a disciplined mind soon learn that all the gods of all the ages are simply fantasies born out of the human imagination. Furthermore, they have arrived at the inevitable conclusion that Man's ego merely substituted these fantasies for the answers he was unable to supply because he has been unwilling to admit that he does not know the answers.

The true Rationalist has a tremendous respect for the precious gift of life and, contrary to his detractors, he has no desire to defile or degrade it during his brief span of consciousness. He has an imperative within him which demands the maximum of integrity if he is to live up to his ideals. He needs no threat of punishment nor lure of reward in a mythical future life to frighten him or cajole him into observing the requirements of human decency.

Beyond this also he is imbued with a sense of awe and wonder before the mighty Cosmos of which he has become aware. Without a doubt, this mighty Cosmos has a Something behind it all which keeps its myriad parts in perfect balance as they hurtle through apparently limitless space. This is indisputable, yet there is no need for him to be afraid of it, for is not he, himself, part of it?

All of the great world religions are based upon the moral and ethical teachings of men outstanding in their own time. These represent nothing more nor less than the ideas of their day and generation, which may or may not have any application in our day. The teachings of Confucius, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed and others all had to do with personal conduct and one's relations with one's fellows. In each case, priestcraft corrupted and distorted these teachings beyond recognition and erected structures of wonderful nonsense in connection with all of them. They all stand for cultivated

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ignorance and thus are an intolerable drag on human progress.

What we need most in this day and age is the development of adult education in the realities of life, putting the past largely behind us. This can be accomplished only through youth centers and adult fellowships, or both in conjunction, where Rationalism can be taught in continuity from the cradle to the grave—combined with fun and good comradeship, of course.

The orthodox Churches have failed their people by stubbornly clinging to ideas out of the dead past which have ceased to have meaning. For them, as for King Belshazzar, the hand again has written upon the wall those mysterious words, MENE, MENE, TEKEL UPHARSIN—which Daniel translated as meaning, "You have been weighed in the balance and found wanting. Your kingdom is given to another." The Christian era draws to a close and the Rationalism era dawns.

2,500 years ago the Greek philosopher, Pythagoras, said: "Man is the measure of all things," and so lets sound the 'trumpets for Man's greatest advance under the banner of Rationalism.

The following telegram was sent October 24th (night letter) to be read at the:
"Board of Estimate Hearing,
City Hall, New York City.

There are many watchers throughout America allert to the attempt to subvert the Constitution which is inherent in the Lincoln Square Project. They are prepared to fight it because it is a national, as well as your city's, concern.

Arthur B. Hewson,
Editor, American Rationalist"

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THE PRIEST AT PRINCETON

"Princeton University has, in effect, 'excommunicated' me."

The painful controversy behind these words of Princeton's Roman Catholic chaplain, Father Hugh Halton, O.P. (Dominican Order of Preachers), has been boiling on the campus for three years. Father Halton, now 44, became the university's chaplain in 1952, after receiving Oxford doctorates in both civil law and philosophy. In 1954, he began attacking certain Princeton professors as "atheistic." Subsequently, he accused the departments of philosophy and religion, a Roman Catholic—Sir Hugh Taylor, dean of the Graduate School—and former President Harold W. Dodds. He said the university stood for "abusive liberalism and lack of any standards of judgment" and "moral and political subversion."

Last month, Robert F. Goheen, 38, took over the presidency of Princeton. One of his first official acts: To implement a Board of Trustees' decision last June to oust Father Halton from the university as Catholic chaplain, thus denying him use of university rooms, publications, and facilities. "Under claims of advancing the pursuit of truth," said Goheen, "he has resorted to irresponsible attacks upon the intellectual integrity of faculty members . . . His accusations in the past year have broadened into large, unsubstantiated charges of malfeasance against the administration of the university. For tactics of this sort no university devoted to freedom of rational inquiry and debate need make a home."

'We Respect the Faith . . .': It was known in Princeton circles that Harold Dodds had wanted to sever the university's official connections with Father Halton. In leaving the announcement up to Goheen, he undoubtedly realized the strength of the new president's position: Although he is a devout Presbyterian, his wife and six children are Catholics. Goheen could, consequestly, deny any an-

Rationalism Defined

EDITOR'S COMMENT:-

This well-reasoned analysis ties in so well with this issue's editorial that it deserves simultaneous publication. The editorial itself is part of the opening "Kick-off" of a symposium participate in by your editor last Spring.

Mr. Merton M. Bulla,
1921 Northwest 35th Street,
Oklahoma City 18, Oklahoma

Dear Mr. Bulla:

My attendance at the discussion group this Sunday and two weeks ago was in a very real sense to "protect" rationalism as it is today from misconceptions engendered by a somewhat diffuse explanation of the basis for modern rationalism unavoidable in any such brief condensation of the topic. The attempt to build a foundation for present-day rationalism **as a distinct "religious" movement,** inevitably resulted in too thin a coverage of the basic problems and rationalism's answers to theology's pat solutions, to be very convincing or effective and, I am afraid, left too many of the audience with the feeling that after all rationalism did not have too much to offer present-day modern thinking. I hope I succeeded in injecting enough into the discussion to disclose there was a broader base of fact and reasonable hypothesis behind rationalism today than Mr. Clemons was able to encompass in his talks.

There is, it should be needless to say, no fixed "creed" of rationalism or body of beliefs which all rationalists accept alike. Like the confused and much abused word "agnosticism", today erroneously accepted as a betwixt and between state of belief or unbelief, the term "rationalism" instead implies a methodology of approach to religious problems rather than any conclusions one may have reached concerning those problems. Thus rationalism in all its varied phases represents merely a method of approach by reasoned thinking, investigation and study of theological preachments which we are thunderously told to believe solely upon someone else's say-so.

As a methodology therefore rather than a settled belief, rationalism embraces all categories of deviations from orthodoxy based on reasoned study of the material world about us, and even many Unitarian ministers are proud to call themselves "rationalists" although their

right to such title is under grave suspicion. Rationalism as a distinct religious movement in this country today can well be conceived as a thin fringe of Indian scouts ranging the countryside far in advance of the first shock troops exploring areas of thought where those with religious clingings have not yet dared to travel.

Just as the rationalism of fifty years ago was pretty much where Humanistic Unitarianism is today, so is the rationalistic leadership today pretty much what the most advanced Unitarian thinking will be fifty years hence. Since the rationalistic Deists of the eighteenth century of whom modern rationalism is the direct descendant, this has been the consistent pattern of progress in religious thought. Labels have changed but the basic concepts and purposes of the movement have not. Rationalism has travelled under many titles but the methodology which the word today signifies has not changed whether it be called Deism, Secularism, Agnosticism, Humanism, Ethical Culture, or the more bluntly honest Atheism.

Furthermore as a distinct movement today we are not so much concerned with beliefs as such, but only with their evil effects upon our social and economic problems. We differ with the Unitarians (and more recently from the Presbyterians, bless their Ike) in that we more clearly recognize and fight the evils of regimented religionism in our politics, our schools, our commercialized entertainment and in all other areas where religionism uses the forces of government, social and economic pressures to compel adherence to their cause. We recognize organized religion per se as the only slightly mitigated evil that is in fact, substituting mere belief and public lethargy for realistic solutions to today's social problems. We feel we can do this more effectively as individuals appealing for support of the nation's laws without fear of the social epithet "irreligious", than by hypocritically hiding behind the skirts of some church whose teachings we cannot accept.

It is not by chance that the slightly more than 50% of our population claiming church adherence, supplies more than 90% of our criminal population plus our juvenile delinquents and has done so for more than one hundred years, or as far back as our statistics go. Nor is it by chance that with the great burgeoning of our conforming church population, the nation's crime rate has skyrocketed to unprecedented heights per capita.

With organized religion experiencing its greatest burgeoning in modern times, with fantastically costly new church buildings being erected by the thousands with governmentally tax-exempt subsidization, our nation's crime rate "under Gawd" is now at its all time high per capita, with more assaults, more thefts, more rapings, ti-Catholic prejudice — and did "We respect the faith and the church of those who are Catholics," Goheen said.

The Dominican priest was bitter. The central issue, he said, "is simply this: May Princeton University retain its claim to the liberal tradition while attempting to suppress intelligent criticism? . . . I have been removed for raising questions that go to the root of faith and reason, rather than for proposing answers . . . This university action will have tremendous rupercussions. It is bigger than the Hiss thing, which I then called 'Princeton's darkest hour'."*

Father Halton's superior, Bishop George Ahr of Trenton, backed up the priest. "The first representations made to the bishop of Trenton in this matter by anyone of official standing at the university came in August," said Bishop Ahr, "when I was informed of the decision (to oust Father Halton) which the board of trustees had made. In my opinion, it was, in effect an ultimatum . . . To have removed Father Halton under those circumstances would have been tantamount to placing the responsibility for the existing situation upon him. That I am unwilling to do."

Catholic Reaction: Informed Catholic circles felt that Princeton officials should have approached the bishop earlier about replacing Father Halton. But university spokesmen said the matter had been discussed with the priest's Dominican superior, who had appointed Father Halton in the first place, and that when Goheen had waited on the bishop in August, Bishop Ahr had said he was completely informed.

Among the 395 Catholic students, at least one said that "Halton has done irreparable harm." Another reported that "no more than ten of the 395 Catholics are strong pro-Haltons." Catholic faculty members (about 25 out of approximately 700) hesitated to speak, but one remarked: "I think

Catholiocs in the faculty agree with Goheen's hope that a new priest should take over."

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*A reference to the address of Alger Hiss, convicted perjurer, before the Whig Clio Club last April (Newsweek, May 7, 1956). In rebuttal, Father Halton invited Willard Edwards of The Chicago Tribune to speak on "The Meaning of Alger Hiss."

—"Newsweek"

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LAUGHINGSTOCK

Lambert Davis, director of the University of North Carolina Press, is one of several hundred white Virginians invited to attend the celebration this month of the 350th anniversary of the settlement of Jamestown. Upon reading that invitations sent to distinguished Virginia-born Negroes were being cancelled, Davis wrote to Thomas B. Stanley, Governor of the Commonwealth tof Virginia, as follows:

"You have taken the ridiculous position of asserting, in effect, that being distinguished is an accomplishment possible only for people of Caucasian ancestry. You have succeeded in making the leadership of the Commonwealth both a stench and a laughingstock in the nation. I believe I can best show my loyalty to the great traditions of Virginia by declining your invitation."

—CIVIL LIBERTIES

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Thomas A. Edison: "So far as religion of the day is concerned, it is all a damned fake."

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more juvenile delinquency of penal character, more homicides and more murders than ever before. Embezzlements at $500,000,000 in 1956 topped all past records and was an increase of 400% over the ten year period next preceding. Embezzlements by officers of banking institutions and trust companies, whose unctuous orthodox "bible class" piety oozes from their very pores, were twice those of the preceding year. Thus pious crime and dishonesty "under Gawd" on the undisputed record is now greater since Gawd's dominion over our temporal affairs was duly enacted into law, than ever before in the nation's history.

"A high degree of religious devotion is frequently accompanied by a great laxity of morals." — Prof. E. A. Westermarck.

"It seems extremely rare to find intelligent irreligious men in prison." —Havelock Ellis. Conversly it is overwhelmingly common to find religious persons constituting the great bulk of our prison population.

"Civilization will thrive when the last stone from the last church, falls on the last priest." —Emil Zola.

"There can be no doubt that, at any time during the last six hundred years, Christendom would have gained morally by the extinction of the church." —Bertrand Russell.

"I consider Christian theology to be one of the great disasters oé the human race." —Alfred North Whitehead.

"I cannot imagine a god who rewards and punishes the objects of his creation, whose purposes are modelled after our own — a god, in short, who is but a reflection of human frailty." —Albert Einstein.

"No evidence or proof of the existence of a God has been found in the phenomena of nature, based on experience." —Charles P. Steinmetz.

"Question with boldness even the existence of God; because **if there be one,** he must approve the homage of reason rather than that of blindfolded fear."—Thomas Jefferson.

Rationalism's concurrence with the religious opinions of great thinkers of the more recent past is painfully self-evident as the above quotations will demonstrate, and these could be multiplied many times. While rationalism scouts ahead of the shock troops, Unitarianism takes time off for a "coffee break" until they receive word from rationalism's scouts that it is safe to advance a few more yards.

Rationalism as a movement today is not so much concerned with the theological dogmas of the dead past, as with finding practical solutions for the pressing present. In some degree we march with the Unitarians (at least

the "emancipated" ones) in seeking practical solutions to present-day problems and cooperate with the Unitarian churches in many metropolitan areas, but we feel that we are as we have always been in the past, several miles ahead of the average Unitarian wishy-washy thinking, and are unwilling to place ourselves generally under the handicap of a formal adherence to any church, except for personal social and economic reasons in individual circumstances.

To sum it up, rationalism as I have found it to exist today in my correspondence with avowed rationalists from one end of the country to the other, is a methodology approach to the study of theological questions, and not a system of beliefs. Thus it is in fact a term actually to replace "agnosticism" in the sense that Huxley originally coined that term, but not in today's accepted sense of a betwixt and between hovering in a mental vacuum.

As rationalists we hold much in common with advanced Unitarian thought, but in general feel that identification with a church or as a "religious" group is a definite and insurmountable handicap in overcoming the very real problems which face our social, economic and political institutions today. We are not communists nor do we advocate communism, but we do fear the social and economic pressures exerted by a neanderthal religionism may in the end force the people to turn to communism for relief.

We strive to be realists above all, and to support realistic solutions to social and economic problems from whatever quarter they may come, but we do refuse to hide our heads in the sand as does the ostrich, nor in the clouds as does the Unitarian. John H. Latta

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RATIONALISM . . . PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

At 11 o'clock Sunday, November 17, our editor will share the pulpit of the Third Unitarian Church of Chicago with its minister. Mr. E. T. Buehrer.

The subject will be "Rationalism, Past, Present and Future." Mr. Buehrer will discuss rationalism historically up to the American Revolution and Mr. Hewson's theme to the present and into the future.

RATIONALIST ORGANIZATIONS

The purpose of this column is to list all known rationalist, secularist and Freethought organizations that are democratically functioning in their area and which we can recommend to our readers. We like our friends to affiliate with local societies no matter under whose particular auspices they operate.

ARIZONA

ARIZONA SECULARISTS, U. S. A., P.O. Box 893, Phoenix, Arizona.

ARKANSAS

Readers in and around Fayetteville, Arkansas, please contact J. W. Dadisman. RFD 7, Fayetteville, Arkansas, who is interested in organizing a freethought society.

CALIFORNIA

FREETHINKERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, Mr. Kolen, 2624 Maple Ave., Los Angeles, California.

SAN DIEGO, CALIF.

FREETHINKERS SOCIETY OF SAN DIEGO 933 9th Ave., San Diego 1. President: James Culbert Vice Pres.: Squires Russel. Meetings: Each Sunday night at 8 P.M. — Public is invited.

DENVER, COLORADO

JEFFERSON PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF COLORADO, Dr. Theodore Schreiber, 1904 S. St. Paul Ave., Denver 10, Colorado.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION, CHICAGO CHAPTER, 615 Davis Street, Evanston, Ill.

PIONEERS OF INDEPENDENT THOUGHT, meet second Sunday of month, T. G. Masaryk School, 5701 W. 22nd Place, Cicero, Ill., 8 P.M.

FREISINNIGE GEMEINDE, Joe Braun, 3541 W. North Ave., Chicago 47, Ill.

CZECHOSLOVAK CONGREGATION OF FREETHINKERS, 4236 W. Cermak Rd., Chicago 23, Ill.

CHICAGO CHAPTER CRFA, 4236 W. Cermak Rd., Chicago 23, Ill.

CICERO CHAPTER CRFA, 5701 West 22nd Place, Cicero, Ill.

CZECH RATIONALIST FEDERATION OF AMERICA, 4236 W. Cermak Rd., Chicago 23, Ill.

BOHEMIAN FREETHINKERS SCHOOLS OF CHICAGO, 2548 S. Homan Ave., Chicago 23, Ill.

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

RATIONALIST SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS, 2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis 6, Mo.

GERMAN SCHOOL ASS'N. AND FREE COMMUNITY OF N. ST. LOUIS, INC., 2218 St. Louis Ave.

AMERICAN RATIONALIST FEDERATION, 2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis 6, Mo.

MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN LIBERAL LEAGUE, 23034 Donald, East Detroit, Michigan.

NEW YORK
INGERSOLL FORUM, meets second Friday of month, 8 p.m. at the Pythian, 70th St., east of Broadway, New York City.

LEAGUE FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, 20 East 100th St., New York 29, N. Y.

NEW YORK CZECH RATIONALISTS, Frank Hrbek, 4512 Liberty Ave., North Bergen, New Jersey.

CLEVELAND, OHIO
CLEVELAND CZECH RATIONALISTS, Anton Belsan, 5149 Fowler, Cleveland 7, Ohio.

YELLOW SPRINGS, OHIO
AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION, Box 227, Yellow Springs, Ohio.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA.
Contact: John H. Latta, Box 10 W Warr Acres Branch, Oklahoma City, Okla.

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA
FRIENDSHIP LIBERAL LEAGUE, 5233 No. Fifth St., Philadelphia 20, Pa.

RHODE ISLAND
HUMANIST FELLOWSHIP, Sahag Avedisian, 64 Bucklin St., Pawtucket, R. I.

TULSA, OKLAHOMA
Contact Joel Johnson, 5336 East 30th Place, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

TEXAS
CONGREGATION OF CZECH RATIONALISTS, 309½ E. 29th St., Houston, Tex.

WISCONSIN
FREIE GEMEINDE, Jefferson Hall, 2617 West Fond du lac Ave., Milwaukee 6, Wisconsin.

JEFFERSON FREETHOUGHT SOCIETY, 2617 West Fond du lac Ave., Milwaukee 6, Wisconsin.

WASHINGTON
SEATTLE SECULARIST SOCIETY, Mr. J. C. Leider, 5327 Fountain Street, Seattle, Washington.

CANADA
VICTORIA HUMANIST FELLOWSHIP, Dr. Marian Sherman, 2901 Sea View Drive, Victoria, B. C., Canada.

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FLORIDA RATIONALIST SOCIETY
OREGON RATIONALIST SOCIETY
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WASHINGTON RATIONALIST SOCIETY
OHIO RATIONALIST SOCIETY
Temporary headquarters:
Org. Committee American Rationalist Federation, 2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis 6, Missouri.

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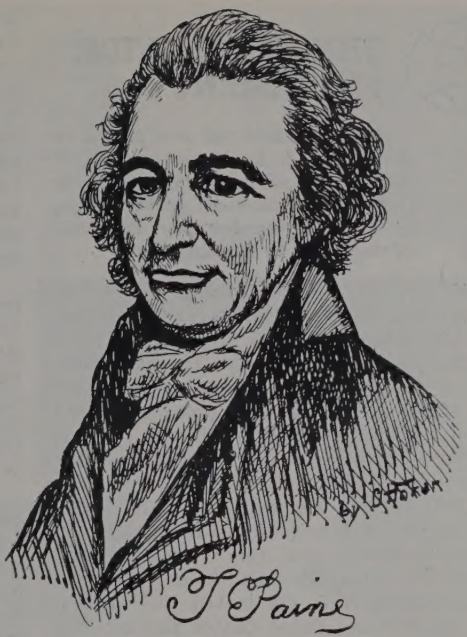
Readers who desire contacts with other Freethinkers in their area are invited to write the Organizing Committee of the American Rationalist Federation, 2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis 6, Missouri.



A TRIBUTE

by Sam Hill

We are here. Yes, we are here
To honor him who held a light
Through all our country's darkest night
A glowing light that men might see
To tread the path that made them free
Whose brilliant mind it's plain to see
Gave us the Declaration of The Free
Whose facile pen inspired men so
They left their bloody footprints in the snow
No dungeon cell your voice could still
Nor conquer your unbending will
To raise mankind from off its knees
And plant old glory in the breeze
For all these gifts you helped bestow
A debt of gratitude we owe
But how can humble man like me
Pay tribute to a mind so free
We simply join the vast acclaim
A nation honors THOMAS PAINE.

THE WIDE, WIDE MOVEMENT

All organizations are urged to send in their news, programs, activities, elections, socials, past or future, and pictures of meetings, officers or members, or anything of interest to Rationalists.

The AMERICAN RATIONALIST FEDERATION concluded another successful convention August 24-25 when delegates and friends from all over the country met in the Thomas Paine Center in Philadelphia. This was recently acquired by the Federation's most progressive and active member, the Friendship Liberal League. This the third meeting of this Federation filled the Center in the city of Brotherly Love. This gathering of Rationalists was the only meeting this year of a functioning Freethought or Rationalist federation in this country. The over-life-size bust of Thomas Paine, on loan from Independence Hall, dominated the window display at the Thomas Paine Center and aroused not only the attention and admiration of all delegates and guests but stopped many passers-by for a second look at the freethought literature surrounding the bust. Another attraction was the ceramic bust of Ingersoll, a gift to the Center from Ingersoll's granddaughter Mrs. Eva Ingersoll Wakefield.

During one of the sessions of the convention, a friend of the Friendship Liberal League presented them with a check for $2,000.00 to speed the liquidation of their remaining indebtedness. A vote of heartfelt thanks was given the donor.

Among the speakers were Paul Puvrez of Montreal, a native of Belgium, just returned from a trip through Belgium, France and Germany, Arthur G. Cromwell, whose recent lecture before a Methodist Episcopal Church group on **Why I do Not Believe in a God** is now available in pamphlet form, and Arthur B. Hewson, editor of **The American Rationalist,** who reported on his impressions from a trip to the British Isles which included contacts with Rationalists in London. Among the guests was Sonja Biersted of Birdsboro, Pennsylvania, author of the penetrating pamphlet **What Does Freedom of Religion Mean?** Sam Hill, of St. Louis, easily qualified as the Poet Laureate of the ARF when he recited his tribute to Thomas Paine .

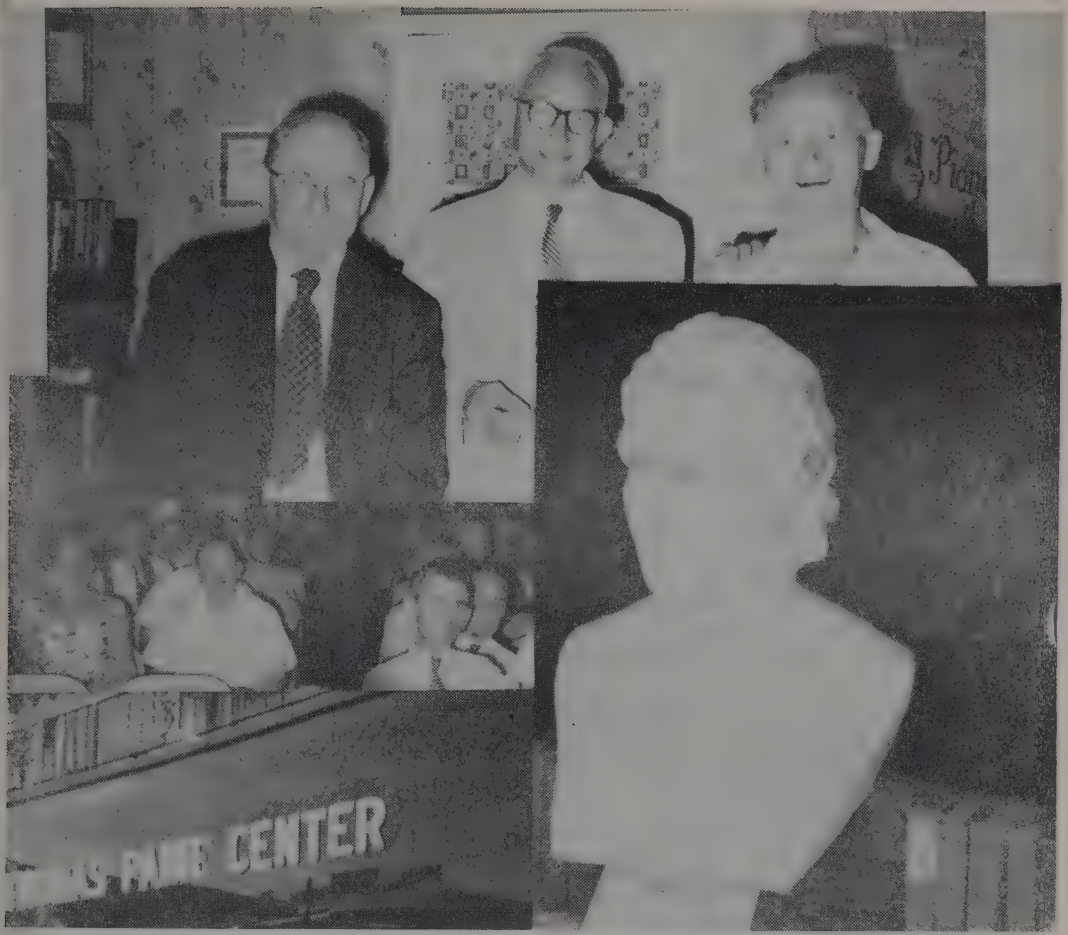
Delegates of all fourteen affiliated groups gave reports of their activities and announced plans for the future. An atmosphere of encouraging optimism pervaded the business sessions. Requests for action to start or revive Freethought organization from all over the country point to a renaissance of Rationalism in America. The report of the secretary made it clear that "if we had the manpower and finances, we could have Freethought groups in every state of the country." The Organizing Committee, the most active unit of the Executive Board, reported the beginning of a campaign to bring five additional state-wide societies into the ARF.

In between meetings, delegates accepted the invitation of Philadelphian friends to show them historical sights such as Independence Hall, the Betsy Ross Home, Carpenter's Hall and the Edgar Allen Poe residence. Delegates enjoyed the abundance of food and drink presented by the distaff members of the FLL and it was suggested they change Philadelphia to the city of "sisterly love."

No action was taken on a report about racist tendencies in the **Truth Seeker** magazine. The consensus was that the only way a reader of a privately owned magazine can express his or her disapproval is by protesting to the editor and, in case no change has been made, to drop the subscription. The amendment proposed by the Rationalist Society of St. Louis, to allow membership-at-large for those who live too far from organized groups was approved. Members will be accepted when approved by the Executive Board upon payment of $1.00. They will entitle members to participate at conventions but without a vote.

New officers of the federation are Mrs. Mazie S. Wolf of Philadelphia as First Vice-President and Elmer Johnson of Milwaukee as Second Vice-President. The three Executive Board members of St. Louis, Boyd Wamack, President, James Kaigler, Treasurer, and Walter Hoops, Secretary, were re-elected. Mr. Kaigler gave the financial report to the convention and mimeographed copies were distributed to delegates. Mr. Lou Alt, of Philadelphia, was Chairman for the convention. A full program of committees functioned, such as Credentials, Resolutions, Constitution and Auditing Committees.

The ARF is affiliated with the World Union of Freethinkers which had its meeting early in September in Paris. The ARF will probably hold its 1958 convention in Milwaukee about the same time as this year's. Rationalists in America should be proud of the success of the ARF in keeping active groups and individuals together and expanding, rather than continue the stagnation to which the movement had become accustomed. This attitude was expressed by Mr. Cromwell, a veteran Freethinker, who considered the ARF the best thing that has happened to the movement in a long time and



At top picture are K. M. Whitten of Philadelphia, Paul Puvrez of Montreal, and Walter Hoops of St. Louis, Secretary of the American Rationalist Federation. At right the bust of Thomas Paine, a center of interest during the Rationalist convention, seems to look with an approving eye on a part of the gathering of Rationalists in the Thomas Paine Center during the annual meeting. At lower left is the large sign on the front of the Paine Center.

* * *

urged all to carry on and not waste time with the past. He ended with "You have the right form of organization, democratically controlled from the bottom up, you have the right kind of leadership, you can't fail to be successful."

The ROBERT G. INGERSOLL MEMORIAL ASS'N. has been denied tax exemption, another liberal organization to be hit by the tax courts recently in what we believe is too coincidental to be other than a conspiracy to cut off such groups from operating. Judge Daniel J. O'Mara, of the New York State Supreme Sourt ruled that the Ingersoll Memorial House in Dresden, New York, was not entitled to tax exemption. On a technicality he held that the incorporation papers of the Association did not properly state the uses of the building within the meaning of the tax exempt provisions of the law. Because of this, the Association has been subjected to back taxes; just after money was spent to put the house in fine condition and to fill it with valuable material concerning the well-known Freethinker. With the caretaker and maintenance expense as well as insurance, the Association is without funds and is appealing to Freethinkers and Rationalists to help. The incorporation papers are to be amended but, in

the meantime, there is much additional expense. Donations may be sent to Robert G. Ingersoll Memorial Association, 370 West 35th St., New York City, New York.

JOSEPH LEWIS gave an address over Radio Station WMIE, Miami, Florida, which was printed in the September issue of THE AGE OF REASON Magazine. He covered the subject perfectly for a radio audience giving much of the history of Thomas Paine. We would like to know the results of his radio offer of a free copy of Paine's **Age of Reason.** He has been invited to appear on TV in Detroit, Michigan.

The **Voice of Freedom,** published by the FREIE GEMEINDE, of Milwaukee, has announced a slight change in subscription price, from 50 cents a year to 75 cents. While only half the paper is printed in English this is still a bargain. Compelled to raise subscription price the magazine, in vivid language, does not beat around the bush but asks: "Dear Readers, Please Come Across!" The able editor, Heinrich Bartel, journeyed to St. Louis and spoke before the FREIE GEMEINDE of St. Louis with an excellent talk. He is a veteran fighter for freedom, a poet, and long-time tditor of the Milwaukee paper.

MARGARET SANGER was interviewed on the Mike Wallace TV show nationally. She stated that the Roman Catholics were not at first against her but that the state and federal laws were then the most violent opposition to her birth control clinics, which first opened in 1916. She was thrown in jail about nine times. She said her father was considered the "village atheist." She did maintain that most opposition today comes from the Catholic Church but that Catholics come to the clinics. She attacked the "celibate attitude" of the Catholic clergy saying that they could not know anything about married life. Today the Planned Parenthood Ass'n. has over 500 clinics.

WALTER HOOPS, active secretary of the AMERICAN RATIONALIST FEDERATION, visited with Joseph Lewis of the Freethinkers of America, and with Charles Smith of the **Truth Seeker** Magazine, in New York after the ARF Convention.

Dr. Theodore Schreiber, organizer and leading figure of the JEFFERSON PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF COLORADO, died following an auto accident in the mountains. We will miss this capable man, and extend to his family our sincere sympathy.

The NUANCE PRESS has been publishing small tracts for Freethinkers. The owner, a retired pharmacist, Mr. J. P. Hanley, publishes unique cards and leaflets with many cartoons. He has a large Freethought library and subscribes to all Freethought publications. They all hear from him with clippings and letters. He is proud of his booklet **Much in Little.** It simply shows how unwise it is for anyone to retire into an inactive life when everyone of us can keep interested rendering useful service to mankind. You can write to the Nuance Press at 407 Bosworth Street, San Francisco 12, California.

At a meeting of the Executive Board of the UNITED SECULARISTS OF AMERICA the officers elected Culbert L. Olson as President. Henry Cox was elected Vice-President, Wm. McCarthy continued as Treasurer-Manager and Hugh Robert Orr as Secretary. Mr. Orr, editor of Progressive World Magazine, has moved from his former home in California to the headquarters of the magazine, in Clifton, New Jersey.

The FREETHINKERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA were addressed by the Honorable Culbert L. Olson on the need of a headquarters to work for separation of church and state.

The TWIN-CITY SECULARISTS held a picnic the latter part of August. In September they discussed Avro Manhattan's book **The Dollar and the Vatican.**

FOREIGN NEWS

The Mayflower School, Tai Solarin, principal, received a complete set of the Dresden Edition of Robert Ingersoll's works from the American Humanist Ass'n. The principal said, "We are devoting the rest of our lives to equipping the library with Ingersolls and Thomas Paines." This liberal school is at Shagamu, Nigeria. Mr. Solarin and his wife Sheila helped to build the school from the ground up with teachers and pupils making mud bricks and drying them in the sun. Roofs are of tin. It is a boys' school at present with 140 pupils. Work starts at 6:30 a.m. after a swim in the river. The fame of the school is spreading. It was visited by the son of the late H. G. Wells. Mr. Solarin says that he is going to do what he can to rid his part of Africa of the thick cloud of fear that weighs so heavily here on every aspect of life. He also states that ". . .the present leaders of modern Africa are men who have, in fact, severed their connections with the church." Of course they do sing praises to God to please the orthodox ears of the electorate, he admits.

The RATIONALIST ASS'N. OF JOHANNESBURG heard Professor M. Valkhoff, chairman of the South Africa Society for Psychical Research, speak on the subject **Problems of a**

Parapsychologist, in the Johannesburg Public Library. Another meeting was taken up with a tape recording offered by the South African Theosophical Society on the subject **Atlantis.**

The Wales and Western Branch of the NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY of England was given a lecture on the Bahai faith by two adherents after which a four-handed debate followed with the two Bahai people and two NSS members, Martin Caines and Dave Shipper, President and Secretary of the W & W Branch. The first speaker to appear at the new meeting place in the Birmingham International Centre was Dave Shipper who spoke on **International Freethought.** The talk was advertised in the press (with Shipper mentioned as European Correspondent of the **American Rationalist).** This was also printed by the Birmingham Information Dept. of the Council House in their weekly program of activities in the city (we suppose equivalent to our Chamber of Commerce) called **What's On in Birmingham.** A good attendance resulted. Six copies of the **American** Rationalist were snapped up as soon as they were put on the display table!

The Annual Conference of the FREIGEISTIGEN VEREINIGUNG DER SCHWEIZ, of Switzerland held a special "Work Session" to discuss future organizational activities.

The BRISTOL RATIONALIST GROUP, of England, was favored by their second visit from Dr. George of Bristol University. His subject was **The Purpose of the Rationalist Press Association.** The RPA has recently combined with the Ethical Union to form the Humanist Association. Another group to affiliate with the Ethical Union is the BRITA LIBERPENSULA ESPERANTISTA ASOCIO (British Freethinkers' Esperanto Association).

The Manchester Branch NSS Secretary Hilda Rogals received an unusual delivery at the outdoor platform when the postman brought a letter from Australia addressed to "The Secretary, Manchester Branch, N.S.S., Deansgate Blitzed Site, Outdoor Lectures, Weekdays 1 pm, Manchester, England." The astute Hilda gave the story to the Manchester Evening News whose gossip columnist featured full details resulting in good, free, advertising for the branch and the N.S.S. Mrs. Rogals has been a reader of AR since the first issue.

Following **The Freethinker** issue which contained **An Interview with A. B. Hewson,** the editor of AR contributed an article **What is Rationalism?** which was printed in its August 16th issue. **The Freethinker** also printed a science article from **The American Rationalist** written by George A. Fink, science editor, entitled **Life from Matter.** Also reprinted in the English journal was the television interview with Joseph Lewis on the Mike Wallace program, taken from the **Age of Reason Magazine.**

Thirty delegates attended a meeting of the Youth Movement of the Belgium HUMANISTISCH VERBOND.

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WHAT A FREETHINKER THINKS . . .

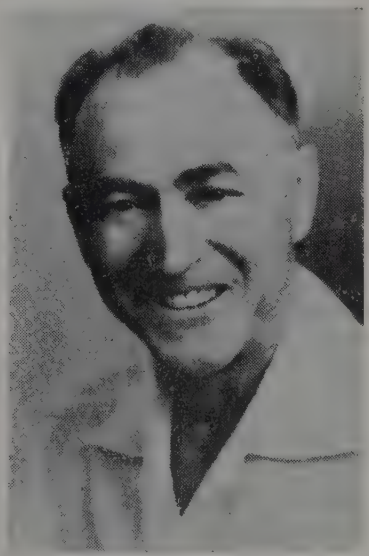
EDITOR'S COMMENT:

The Rationalist Reformation rolls forward. The orthodox begin to listen to reality.

Speech by JAMES HERVEY JOHNSON before a class in the First Methodist Church of San Diego, California, Sept. 1, 1957.

PART I

It is a sign of religious tolerance and progress that you have invited me here to tell you what Freethinkers believe. The word Freethinker is self-explanatory. They think for themselves. Freethinkers call those who let others do their thinking for them, slave thinkers.



In some churches such as the Catholic, no one would be allowed to speak who did not agree that the Catholic religion was the only true one and all others counterfeit. In fact the

members are prohibited from attending other churches, from reading banned books, from attending certain movies, or even such organizations as the YWCA and YMCA for fear they might hear something to which those who control them object. Do they object for fear they may lose control over their followers?

I was brought up in the Methodist Church. My grandfather was a Methodist minister. He was a very kind, honest, generous man. He would get up in the middle of the night, go out in rain and snow to comfort the sick or dying members of his congregation or others. But he was also a strict observer of the Bible he believed in. He never read the Sunday paper on Sunday, nor carried on any business that day. All of his family and hundreds of friends loved and admired him for his honesty and goodness.

I went to Sunday school until I was 14, to Methodist Sunday schools when available and to Congregational, Baptist, Presbyterian or others, when the Methodist Churches were too far away for me to walk to them. I have attended this First Methodist Church on hundreds of occasions during the fifty years I have lived in San Diego. I have also attended most of the churches of the major denominations here and in other cities. I have gone to Catholic and spiritualist churches, to Theosophist lectures and to most of the Christian churches and have spoken in a number of them. I have debated with members of some lesser known religious organizations. For many years I believed in what I could understand of the same doctrines you believe in.

My father was an agnostic in his later years. My favorite uncle was an atheist, and my mother was nominally an Episcopalian, although she never went to church in her later years, and very seldom when she was younger. Her brothers were freethinkers, although I never discussed religion with them until their later years. My brother was a freethinker.

I admired and loved my father, who was a fine, honest, kindly and generous man, like my grandfather. My uncles were also kind and honest. They were 49ers, pioneers of the old west and rugged individualists.

You will wonder why I dropped the beliefs which I had been taught in Sunday School and church, and I will tell you. It was because I studied science, religion, history, human beings, evolution, astronomy, psychology, geography, archeology and many other subjects. As I comprehended more about people, the world and the universe, I came to the conclusion that religious beliefs were founded on the superstitions of stone age men and were not based upon modern knowledge and science.

I found that the people who believed in religion were no better than those I knew who did not believe in it. In fact I found that there were a great many people who were religious who were hypocrites. A great many of the religious people I knew were bigoted and intolerant. Others of them would lie and most of them were selfish. The truth is that the comparatively few non-believers I knew were good people and dependable and honest. I tell you these things so that you will know how I gradually dropped my faith in religion.

I believe in honesty and truthfulness, not because I fear a god or a devil, but because I think it is the best way for people to live together. I believe in helping others because when we cooperate with our neighbors we make life easier for all. I believe in treatng others as I wanted to be treated—but I certainly do not believe in turning the other cheek. And the truth is that I never knew any Christians who did either. If a man wrongs me or others, I think he ought to be locked up or exterminated. The Golden Rule is all the ethics a man really needs to live by and the ancient Greek philosophers had developed such a rule long before the Christian era. Confucius had expressed this philosophy four hundred years before the alleged birth of Jesus. I believe in tolerance and the rights of free speech, free press, freedom of religion, and separation of church and state.

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Most of the freethinkers I have known live up to these principles very thoroughly—much more so than the religious people I have known.

Now I will tell you what most freethinkers do not believe in. Some freethinkers believe in some kind of religion, but they have arrived at those beliefs by their own thinking and not because they were indoctrinated with them.

I am also an atheist, besides being a freethinker. I do not believe there is any god, devil, angels, heaven, hell or any future life. I do not believe in anything supernatural. I do not believe the Bible is the inspired word of God or anything but the writings of ignorant, superstitious men, many of whom were fanatics. I do not believe in the story of Jesus being born of a virgin and there is grave doubt in my mind whether such a person ever lived. If he did, he was only a man without any supernatural qualities whatever. I do not object to you believing these things. I used to believe them because I had been taught to believe them when I was young and had not yet developed a mature reasoning mind.

Science has found no heaven or hell, no angels or devils, no God or holy ghost. We can see hundreds of billions of miles into space and we drill many miles into the earth. We have explored the earth from pole to pole, climbed the highest mountains and explored the ocean depths with aqua lungs. For fifty years I have read of these explorations in the National Geographic Magazine and in many books and magazines—and none of the claims that there are supernatural things claimed by religion have been found.

In the bible times men believed the earth was flat. They believed that this was the only world and that the sun went around the earth or rather across it every day. The church burned Bruno at the stake; put Galileo in prison for all his life and burned Servetus at the stake because they said the world was round, that the earth revolved, and that there were other worlds than this.

The Bible says the world was made in seven days, but science says it has been developing for billions of years. I myself have seen the fossil dinosaurs buried in the solid stone in Utah hundreds of millions of years ago, and I have confidence in the methods of science because I can see, in the great valleys and on the mountains, and in fact all along the highways of our own country, the actual signs of the slow change in the structure of the earth. In a dozen museums I have seen the fossil remains of the evolutionary change from the lowest forms of life to human beings and all about me I see the signs of evolution before my eyes. Race horses are bred to run faster, chickens are bred to lay more eggs, cows give several times as much milk as they used to. In a few years, by selection, the yield of corn has increased from 40 bushels to 100 bushels per acre. Entirely new kinds of fruits and vegetables have been developed. History and the story in ancient ruins, in the caves and fossils show that man has increased in intelligence during thousands of years. (Concluded in January Issue.)

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RATIONALIST COMMENT

How the Canaanite sky-god El sired seventy Sons of God out of the mother-goddess Asherat: The Canaanites of Ras Shamra symbolized the idea of force, and especially the force of procreation, by a bull. It is therefore not surprising to find that in some of the texts the god El appears in hypostatic form as Spor-El or the Bull-El. It is in the form of a mighty bull that El is found in union with Asherat-of-the-Sea, the chief goddess and mother of the gods. The decisive passage, a sort of **Annunciation,** reads thus: "The hand of El the King will lay hold of you, the love of the Bull. El will strike you blind.' — Elsewhere we are told that as the years passed Asherat gave birth to seventy divine sons. Then the god cried out: 'Good news, o my son, whom I have created'. (C. F. A. Shaeffer, **The Cuneiform Texts of Ras-Shamra-Ugarit,** p. 59)

* * *

How the Jewish-Christian god Yahweh sired 'Jesus' out of the virgin Mariam: The occasional visiting of a woman by Yahweh to bring to birth a son seems to be implicit in Paul's interpretation (Rom. IX 7-9; ef Gal. IV 22-9) of the story of Yahweh's promised visit to Sarah and the consequent birth of Isaac (Gen. 18. 10-15; 21, 1-3), son not of the flesh (of Abraham), but "of the promise". Philo of Alexandria, an older contemporary of Jesus, saw in such passages actual begetting by God. (The Origin of European Thought about the Body, etc., also of some basic Jewish and Christian Beliefs, p. 503. By R. B. Onions, Cambridge, 1954.)

THE DILEMMA OF LIBERALISM *

by BRUCE L. MELVIN

PART TWO

MAN'S EMOTIONS AND SYMBOLISMS

Western man is building a new culture on science and technology. In exploring the hitherto mysteries of nature, science and technology he has created a world; procrustian-like, has made material beds in which religious principles seem impossible to rest. Man has thus become a victim of his own creations, his doubts. The modern religious liberal is confronted with conclusions by such authorities as C. J. Jung, a great pioneer in psychiatry who wrote:

> "Nothing influences our conduct less than do intellectual ideas." 5 "Art is a kind of innate drive that seizes the human being and makes him its instrument." 6
>
> Whenever there is established an external form, be it ritual or spiritual, by which the yearnings and hopes of the soul are adequately expressed—as for instance some living religion—then we may say that the psyche is outside, and no spiritual problem, strictly speaking, exists . . . As long as all goes well and the psychic energy finds its application in adequate and well-regulated ways, we are disturbed by nothing from within. No uncertainty or doubt besets us, and we cannot be divided against ourselves. But no sooner are one or two of the channels of psychic activity blocked, then we are reminded of a stream that is damned up. The current flows backward to its source: the inner man wants something which the visible man does not want and we are at war with ourselves. 7

Western man, acording to Jung, has lost his God, and as Nietzche in Germany saw in his day, "The death of a god is always a historically important phenomenon because the God symbol is the core of every society." 8

The religious liberal has one of three alternatives, if religiously inclined; 1. revert to church authority, 2. create new rituals and dogmas, or 3. assume that Western man is entering on a stage in the growth of consciousness in which he is capable of depending on his inner-being through aid from others of like mind. This last assumes a wide-spread acceptance of the scientific method motivated by a religion of Humanity. There is little evidence that man is doing this.

Modern man seems to find his god in the impersonal but it is well to point out that the people of Hindu faith

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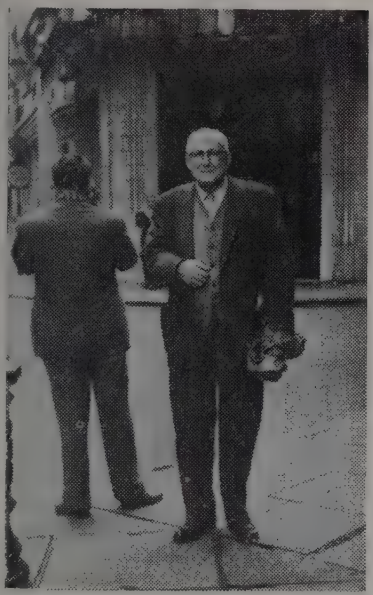

This being his first venture overseas, Editor Hewson says he felt for all the world like Mark Twain. A sidewalk photographer caught him leaving the Regent-Palace Hotel, Piccadilly.

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once worshipped the impersonal but for some reason they created stone images, decorating their great temples with them, thus giving meaning in stone to their inner drives and concepts. An additional fact is that they interpret their images in terms of symbols and not literally.

The honest seeker asks very basic questions: What can be substituted for the great music such as Handel's Messiah? In painting what can take the place of "The Last Supper"? What can give the individual a sense of inner cleansing such as baptism has afforded? Can psychiatrists provide the spiritual support that the confessional should give? What can induce the sense of unity, oneness, as can the communion set in the age-old litanies and chants? What can appeal more strongly and positively to the emotions than the Gregorian chant? And what can pull men out of dispair better than the Salvation Army? What are we to say about modern healing effected through the orthodox appeal?

As the West has gone to Asia for some of its most potent drugs, drugs which came into use through ages of folk experience, perhaps we can learn from Asian people in the realm of religion. One such bit of wisdom my be **Li, The Golden Mean,** of Confucian culture. The middle ground between the intellect and the emotion is a way by which modern man may resolve his dilemma.

* A condensed version of a address before the Ethical Society of Washington, D. C., April 14th, 1957. Mr. Melvin is Ass't Prof. in the Sociology Dept., University of Maryland.

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8. Ira Progoff, **Jung's Psychology and Its Social Meaning,** New York, The Julian Press, 1953, p. 117.

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FRED ROSENBERG

LET US REASON TOGETHER

Part III

Know you well my campus friends who rest you where you do lay

All the so-called "man of religion" can answer to the world's injustices is to pray!

Force you on your knees and make you bow your head!

Rob you of your faith in self and man 'til you are all but dead!

Drum into you that man is of but little worth and that he was born to die

Teach you to be a moral coward afraid to dare or to even try!

Teach you to believe that you are filled with sin

And no matter how much you struggle that you just can't win!

That the world is wicked and that the world is wrong; —

This is the doleful burden of the so-called "man of faith's" song!

That Knowledge is a painful thing; —

Just plain old misery to 'thinking man' will bring!

Since we can't know all the answers why should we even try

This is, so help me, called a faith worthy of a "man of reason" to live by!

Listen, oh my sisters and my brothers, to "sweet reason's" cry

Man was not just born to live and then to die; —

Man was born to gaze in wonder and then to reason why!

Man was born to struggle and to grow!

Man was not born to learn all the answers in a day!

Man was born to think and then to learn—is that not the Rationalist way?

Who would truly want to have all the answers never need to grow?

Is that not the way of stagnation and death of misery and woe?

Are these not some of the thoughts we are thinking as on the campus grounds we sit?

Ever learning; — ever growing; — just a little bit?

To the editor:

In the September issue, second paragraph, right side column, page 3, is very good especially that clause stating that "when one becomes an Atheist and stops there, he then and there actually ceases to be a Freethinker."

Only, you have it twisted. A person does not necessarily become an Atheist because he does not accept the belief in a God. He becomes an Atheist only when he takes this negation as the end and purpose of thought . . "Atheism" is not an active philosophy and never was. It is simply the attitude of one who is so disturbed by the beliefs of others that he cannot direct his own belief into any constructive channel. So why "hang on" to a term that has been a handicap to progress all along?

Jesse Bryan,
Decatur, Ill.

* * *

In forbidding prayer in ints public schools, New Jersey has finally recognized the First Amendment to our Constitution, which gives us the right to doubt as well as to believe.

G. H. Phillips,
Oklahoma City, Okla.

* * *

I thought the convention went off very well and several things of importance attended to. I sure hope the A.R.F. grows into a real progressive and cohesive movement for the advancement of Rationalism and common sense.

I received the Rationalist last week and I thought it very good. I sure got a lot of nice compliments . . . all of which flattered me no end.

And, I want to add here and now that your talk at the con-

vention and your editorial in this last Rationalist were excellent, adding zest and encouragement to the whole Movement.

I met so many fine people at the convention. I wish we could meet once every week!

My hearing is a bit better. My eyes, however, bother me a bit. Otherwise I am YOUNG and eager to slay the dragons of fear and superstition. I wish I could offer myself as a candidate for "National Organizer". If I could afford it, I would offer my services absolutely free, but transportation and lodgings do cost. If I can help in this work, I will. An occasional trip I could swing. I so want this new movement to succeed.

Arthur G. Cromwell.

* * *

Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson, dissenting in the case of Zorach vs. Clauson: "The day that this country ceases to be free for irreligion it will cease to be free for religion—except for the sect that can win political power."

Robert Wolfe,
Philadelphia, Pa.

—from Newsweek

* * *

Let those who want parochial schools build them, but keep the religionists' hands off our public schools.

Marcia Slattery,
Topeka, Kans.

•

The first time 4-year-old Mary was taken to church by her parents she was absolutely fascinated by the earnest young minister, high in his pulpit given to involved rhetoric and wild waving of his arms. Finally Mary whispered to her mother, "What will we do if he ever gets out?"

POPE JOAN

A riddle of the dark ages

by Chris Olsen

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AMERICAN RATIONALIST

2218 St. Louis Ave. St. Louis 6, Mo.

THE HUMANIST BASIS FOR MORALS

by Alvan L. Davis

As Dr. Addison Gulick has stated: "There are three possible views of life:

1. That of irrational subjective emotionalism.
2. Transcendental authoritarianism.
3. That of scientific investigation and acceptance of the fruits thereof."

This third position is that of Evolutionary Humanism.

Humanists throughout the world are in accord that any ethical code to be effective and command permanent respect must be based on scientific facts and developed by the method of science. It is realized today that human progress depends upon freedom to search for truth, let the chips fall where they will. Likewise, individual progress depends upon one's search for truth about himself. It is through selfknowledge that one becomes free and life offers its deeper meanings. Truth is an illusive bird. The only proven way of putting salt on its tail is by use of the scientific method. Humanism is based squarely on scientific knowledge and the method of science.

A scientific code of moral conduct must of necessity be based on the fundamental instincts and reactions common to all mankind. Hence, a natural ethical code for man must be **implicit in the nature of man.** Humanism's code of moral conduct derives from man's instinctive reaction to the treatment he receives from others. Human beings are by nature gregarious and also cooperative man is a social animal. But everywhere and always, he resents conduct by others that deprives him of certain obvious natural rights — to wit: The right to life, and to liberty of action, thought and expression; the right to own and enjoy the use of property acquired by his own efforts, or inherited from his forebearers. Also the right to freedom from slander or false witness.

The resentment that is aroused universally by infringement of these rights always leads to rancor, strife and bloodshed. Hence, nature's code must forbid all such acts, and in their place prescribe the code of kindness and goodwill towards all fellow beings — in other words, the code of "Live and Let Live;" the do-as-you-would-be-done-by code; the Golden Rule. This rule defines man's duty towards others.

Man also has natural duties to himself. Here, nature prescribes temperance in the use of foods, drinks, and other bodily satisfactions, in order to build and maintain a sound and healthy body. It is man's duty to be a healthy animal. And, further, nature prescribes man's continuing study of himself, his mind anl his environment, so that he may become self-reliant, patient, modest and wise. Man's goal of life is the building of his own personality, striving always for a better understanding of the world he lives in and for the improvement of himself.

The foregoing is the bedrock of nature's code — the code of Humanism. It is not dependent on any command from on high, but is built on basic human instincts. Its teachings are

consonant with the wisdom of the ages. It embodies the ethical core of all great teachings. It is at once a philosophy, an ethical code, and a mode of life. It guides the way to a free and satisfying life of harmonious relationships. It follows the revelations of scientific truth, to make full use of all truth as it is unfolded.

Humanism reverences the great leaders of the past — the scientists, humanitarians, and leaders in the cause of human freedom and equality. It pins its hope for the future on the labor and achievements of such men as Julian Huxley, Anton J. Carlson, Ashley Montagu, and others too countless for mention. It applauds the legions of noble women who are in the strife.

Humanism is optimistic about man and his future. Man is unique in all creation; he alone has the power of time-binding. By self-study and that of his social environment, he has it within his power consciously to direct his future evolution. Humanism bids him do so. Humanism believes the quality of rightness is rooted in human nature and requires only suitable conditions from **earliest infancy** onward in order to become dominant in mankind

No supernatural element is needed in the effort to harmonize oneself with nature and to bring about enduring adjustment to life, so that common experiences become sanctified. No divine admonitions are necessary to spiritualize the "Shared Quest for the Good Life."

In place of the authoritarian systems of Marx and of the revealed religions, Humanism offers complete freedom in man's thought, and his search for truth. It does not seek conformity in the thought of individuals. Each is free to work his way onward, by trial and error, in the development of his personality. Humanism has as a goal the fully developed noble personality, which it regards as the highest achievement of the evolutionary process. It does not envisage an imaginary Utopia, but rather a sane and ordered society in which men may have the chance to realize their potentialities to the full.

I will conclude with the words of Nobel Prize winner, Dr. H. J Muller: "Humanists are only striving to make men realize that if they move forward in cooperation and goodwill, with moral courage, and in intellectual freedom and honesty, they can gain for all humanity an ever greater world and nobler life."

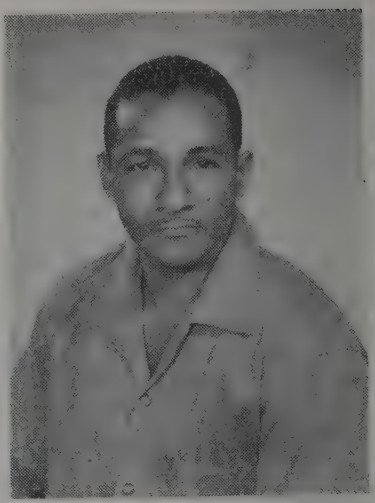
•

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

Question:— Four girls lunched together—One Catholic, two Protestant, one Unitarian. The Protestants told of their churches and one remarked, "We are all working toward the same goal and if, in my town, there was only a Catholic church, there I would go". The other Protestant agreed readily. The Unitarian remained silent. The Catholic said, "We're not allowed to visit a Protestant church". My comment then was, "Yes, I know". How should one react to the Protestant's unwitting tolerance?

Answer:— It would be in good taste to say, "I could not be comfortable in a church which claims complete control of me and deprives me of the right to think for myself". Such an answer could stir a question attitude without giving offense.

Introducing



Felix F. Corbie, a member of the National Secular Society, Branch 2, of Trinidad, British West Indies, and a subscriber to AR.

•

The Civil Liberties Union has accused the National Organization for Decent Literature, a Catholic outfit, of imposing censorship of what American people may read. It protests against blacklisting certain authors and encouraging boycotts of merchants who sell the banned books. On the list of "objectionable" authors are: William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Aldous Huxley, Irwin Shaw, Richard Wright.

•

Ecclesiastical authorities were instrumental in bringing Flaubert, famous French author of "Madame Bovary" to trial just 100 years ago. He was accused of outrage against public morals and religion but won a sensational acquittal.

HOW TO ORGANIZE

a Rationalist Group

ARF Pamphlet No. 1 FREE to interested persons wanting to start a group in their locality. — Write to:

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2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis 6, Mo.

WALTER HOOPS:

we honor . . .

NOVEMBER

5, 1855 **Eugene Victor Debs** born. Beloved Socialist and Trade Union leader and outstanding orator. While in jail for opposing America's entry into the first world war, 919,000 people voted for him as their candidate for the presidency in 1920.

7, 1837 **Elijah Parish Lovejoy** killed by a mob of southern sympathisers who were opposed to his abolitionist views expressed in the Alton, Illinois "Observer".

11, 1867 **Joseph McCabe** born. A monk and Catholic priest in his early life, he left the church and became one of the most prolific writers and peripatetic speakers of the international freethought movement. There is probably not a single rationalist in this country whose intellectual development was not influenced by the force of McCabe's arguments. His scholarship was of the highest calibre; his many challenges to his former collegues to contradict his statements were never accepted. His autobiography "80 Years a Rebel" tells the details of a dedicated life.

17, 1794 **George Grote** born. English historian and liberal whose "History of Greece" is considered a classic of historical writing.

18, 1647 **Pierre Bayle** born. A fore-runner of the French enlightenment, he may be called the first Rationaist philosopher. The "Historical and Critical Dictionary", published in 1697, is his most important work and set the pattern for a number of dictionaries. Voltaire praised him highly and called him "the honor of human reason, who looked for truth but always found errors."

24, 1632 **Baruch Spinoza** born. Outstanding philosopher, liberal and defender of freedom of speech and opinion. He stood for the subordination of the church to the state. His teachings were considered blasphemous, and caused his excommunication from the Jewish congregation.

30, 1835 **Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens)** born. Best known for his literary achievements—Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, etc. — His opposition to organized religion is well known and his irreverent satirical writings against the clerics have gained him many friends among freethinkers.

DECEMBER

4, 1795 **Thomas Carlyle** born. A leading author, historian and social critic of his day, he had a tremendous influence on the British reform movement. He had studied for the ministry but his doubts became too strong. Emerson and John Stuart Mill were his close friends. The "mumbo jumbo" of the churches—as he called it—did not appeal to him at all.

10, 1805 **William Lloyd Garrison** born. Foremost American abolitionist. His words in the first issue of the "Liberator" have become famous: "I am in earnest, I will not equivocate, I will not excuse, I will not retreat a single inch — and I will be heard."

12, 1821 **Gustave Flaubert** born. French writer whose famous novel "Madame Bovary" was attacked by the Roman clergy but successfully defended in court.

25, 1709 **Julien Offray de la Mettrie** born. Proponent of a monistic, materialistic philosophy and believer in the "greatest happiness of the greatest number". He suffered persecution by the Roman hierarchy and had to leave France. Frederick of Prussia offered him refuge at his court in Berlin.

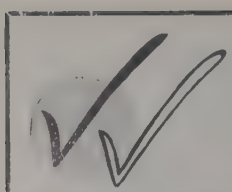
27, 1571 **Johannes Kepler born.** Mathematician and astronomer, he developed his three famous laws, which proved the teachings of Copernicius correct. He corresponded with Galileo and was closely associated with Tycho Brahe.

•

New Goals for Old Age

"The horse and the mule live 30 years
And know nothing of wine and beers,
The cow drinks water by the ton
And at 18 is nearly done.
The dog at 15 cashes in
Without the aid of rum and gin.
The cat in milk and water soaks
And then at 12 short years it croaks.
The modest, sober, bone dry hen
Lays eggs for nogs, then dies at 10.
All animals are strictly dry,
Then sinless live and swiftly die,
But sinful, ginful, rum-soaked men
Survive for three score years and ten.
And some of us, the mighty few,
Stay pickled 'til we're 92!"

—Anonymous



CHECK *and* DOUBLE CHECK *by* 'CHEKA'

AS THE MONTHS ROLL BY . . .

Yes, the months roll by and November is here again. The New Year is just around the corner, reminding me to tell our friends that it is time again to send your New Year Greetings to the American Rationalist. If you want your greeting to appear in the January issue you will have to beat the deadline . . . that means that you'll have to send it in before the first of December. So, dear folks, let's have the pages of the next issue of the AR filled with greetings, how about it?

WELCOME, MR. CROMWELL!

We welcome Mr. Arthur G. Cromwell to the editorial staff of the American Rationalist. Mr. Cromwell was present at the Philadelphia convention of the American Rationalist Federation last August, has seen the unity of American Rationalists in practice and decided that he wants to do his share. As of this issue, Mr. Cromwell is serving the Rationalist cause as the asistant editor of our more popular than ever magazine, the American Rationalist . . . Welcome, Mr. Cromwell.

IF YOU BUY BOOKS . . .

If you are a Rationalist, you must do quite a lot of readin'. That means that you buy quite a lot of books, too. Now, I have a tip for you, friend . . . Get your books through the book department of our magazine. The service can't be beat and you are doing your bit in helping to build the American Rationalist. And while we are braggin' . . .

We have a big hunk of that second thousand quota of readers for the AR behind us . . . but still have a bit to finish it off . . . did you do your share, buddy? Did you get that new subscriber for the American Rationalist? You know, of course, that if everyone of us gets only one new reader, our readership will double (snap) just like that. Only one, please?

Well, tut, tut, I must be off, so I can catch one too . . . so-long, folks,

vic.

■

"Those who speak untruth in this world bishops or archbishops, reverends or right reverends, are making a hell here and now."
—Senzaki and McCandlers. Buddhism and Zen. Philosophical Library.

RELIGION AND THE ARMY - British

by Dave Shipper

John Sheldon's article on "Separation of Church and State" (A.R., Nov.) was of particular interest to me, living as I do, in a country which has an **official** State Church. (Yours is **unofficial,** but the effect seems much the same!)

Among the Immediate Practical Objects on my National Secular Society membership card is (a) The Disestablishment and Disendowment of the State Church, (b) The abolition of all Religious Tests and Disabilities in schools, colleges, municipalities, Parliament, the Executive and the Judicature; (c) The Abolition of All Religious Teaching and Bible Reading in schools or other educational establishments supported by the State; and (d) The Abolition of the Blasphemy Laws in order that Religion may be canvassed as freely as other subjects, without fear of fine or imprisonment."

These objects are self-explanatory and show some of the difficulties under which British Freethinkers labor. Mr. Sheldon's observations on religion in the armed forces reminded me of the time in 1945, when just before the cessation of hostilities, I presented myself, a reluctant 18 year old conscript, at Winchester Barracks (England) for Army Service.

I should here explain that I was never exposed to religious indoctrination, unlike 99.99% (or something like that figure) of British infants and therefore, had never held religious beliefs, and had classified myself as an Atheist as soon as I was old enough to understand the meaning of the word.

Therefore, while my details were being entered in the Army Book 64 (Part 1), which every British soldier carried as proof of identification, when asked my religion, I replied, "Atheist."

The sergeant "enrolling" me stopped writing, surveyed me in a quizzical manner and speaking in the kindly tone reserved for new recruits (sic) requested a repetition.

"Atheist," said the undisciplined youth.

"We don't have any of those here," said the sergeant, "I'll put you down as C. of E. (All apathetic or disinterested soldiers are entered as Church of England—this, possibly, accounts for the state of our State Church—always a large turn-out for Church Parade!)

The sergeant seemed a trifle perturbed at my refusal to sign the book if "C. of E." was entered and a (by now) rather over-awed young civilian (I hadn't signed the book yet) was

marched to the Regimental-Sergeant-Major, a fearsome figure in any regiment.

Rather comically (although I couldn't appreciate the humor at the time), the R.S.M. informed me that if I should meet with an accident, some man-of-god had to administer to my spiritual welfare, that there had never been an Atheist (known?) in the barracks and that all soldiers prayed in battle! Besides this, there were Church Parades!

The sergeant, who by now, was regarding me with the kind of look usually reserved for two-headed kittens and kindred phenomenon, was detailed to march me to be interviewed by the Padre. Naturally, the wondering military nonconformist was taken to see the C. of E. Padre, a young lieutenant who looked scarcely older than I.

Although at that time, a religious (or non-religious) ignoramus, the young Padre's first question to me (after taking the details of this puzzling case from the perspiring sergeant) was pitiable; in its simplicity. "How did I think I was here?" he inquired and shudderingly listened whilst I gave my opinion that my appearance was the result of a simple biological function. Two or three similarly puerile questions brought simply logical answers and following this rank heresy, the wondering sergeant was told "I think you had better register this man as an Atheist, sergeant."

Triumphantly, I signed the book with the unusual materialistic description and from then on was referred to as "the Atheist" by the entire barracks. Unlike the American forces (according to Mr. Sheldon) my identification tag was stamped with the blasphemous diminutive "'ATH" and during my three years service I was left severely alone by the military theologians.

During my service in the U.K. I did meet a little discrimination when forced to take part in Church Parades (to be left standing outside the Church for the duration of the service) or alternatively to be placed on fatigue.

However, once overseas I met with none of this bigotry and proudly carried the irreverent A.B. 64 (Part 1) during the whole of my Army career.

One thing I can assure you of: The average serviceman, British or American, irrespective of "tag" is completely secular (and remarkably similar) in off-duty hours.

•

A Thought for Today . . .

That hell is not a place is confirmed by physical science.

That hell is a state of consciousness is confirmed by psychical science and the dreadful human activities of the past and present.

RELIGION AND THE ARMY - U.S.A.

by James F. Standish

One of the commonest fallacies in Constitutional interpretation is that the First Amendment prohibits the establishment of any particular religion. This Amendment prohibits the establishment, not of "a religion," or "any religion," but of plain, unmodified "religion." Yet in the Army, an organization charged with defending this same Constitution, religion is not only established, but becoming more so.

Among the earliest experiences of many basic trainees is being marched to Chapel one Sunday, and given a choice of going in or, be it August or January, standing outside in formation until the service is over.

Service Clubs, day rooms, and other such places are being festooned with religious posters put out by the Department of the Army. Some of these bill our country as "one nation under God," while others assure us that we need spiritual guidance and should visit the church of our choice, often.

Once a month every soldier, unless he has a special dispensation from his "superiors," is subjected to a form of training called "Character Guidance," an indoctrination lecture given by the chaplain. The ones I have heard range from a diatribe against secular government to a sermon on marriage from a celibate priest.

Army buses are used for Sunday-school transportation.

In the recent "Code of Conduct," it is made the official credo of American soldiers that "I will trust in my God and in the United States of America," though we are not told what to do if we have no god, nor yet how we can trust a country that promises us total disestablishment of religion and proceeds to give us establishment.

WALTER HOOPS

At Random . . .

The Roman Church has difficulties keeping boys who enter preparatory seminaries. Only one out of nine students sticks to it and only one out of seven girls takes the final vows.

* * *

The propagandists for Billy Graham estimated the crowd on Times Square when he wound up his crusade in New York at 200,000. The police were willing to grant 75,000. Now comes the actual count based on photographic evidence: barely 60,000. — The other claims made for this ludicrous revival may need scaling down in the same proportion.

* * *

Contributions from Webb C. Patterson of Waltham, Mass.:

Science is the grand alliance of mind with nature.

Death is the broken thread of eternity.

Empiricism is the grand alliance of mind with nature.

Life's burbling cup is destiny enough.

* * *

"The fear of being different is now a larger consideration than the fear of hell" says Dr. R. E. Osborn of Butler University's school of religion. Explaining recent membership figures of the churches he continues: "One cannot be sure whether an applicant for church membership is seeking salvation or social respectability."

* * *

"Ethical Practices in Business Economy: A Function of Government" is the title of an article by Dr. Marius Hansome published in the spring issue 1957 of the Journal of Human Relations (Central States College, Wilberforce, Ohio). Write for sample copies to them—not to us.

* * *

The outstanding man of 1955 in Fort Worth, Texas, a church elder, boy scout leader etc. etc. turned out to be an embezzler of amazing proportions. Total loss may amount to close to a million dollars.

* * *

From an editorial in the "Saturday Review": Even religion has been made to glorify violence. Sunday school in too many cases has become less an adventure in the higher reaches of the human spirit than a grandstand seat in an arena of interminable warfare. There is little compassion for slain people when they happen to be on the other side. Not much is said about the tragedy of human conflict; the battle is the thing. Even the Deity is vested with certain violent and vindicative moods. He is not above stoning people when they displease Him, and innocent children are punished for the sins of remote ancestors. There is a hard wall of separation between the sublime and non-violent ethics of the Sermon on the Mount and their application in everyday life. It is as though it is more important to belong than it is to believe.

* * *

Lessing, next to Schiller Germany's foremost liberal poet, author and playwright, coined these lines:

"Do you realize how much easier it is to speculate than to do a good deed? How an indolent man—although he may not be aware of it—prefers pious dreams in order to avoid an act of goodness?

* * *

The Association on American Indian Affairs, Inc., 48 East 86th Street, New York 28, N. Y., is fighting the battle of our Indian population against the encroachments on their rights by state governments and Federal bureaucracy in Washington. It deserves your support; write for information.

* * *

Many people avoid the word death and have invented all kinds of euphemisms. A very funny substitute comes from the McCormick Theological Seminary where it is said that any reference to the "grim reaper" must, of course, be changed to "international harvester."

* * *

While talking about scholarships, a Roman cleric hit the nail on the head when he said: "one great fault of the Catholic school system is a certain failure to stimulate Catholic youth to think for themselves."

* * *

It took a convert to assert in the worst possible taste that "all identity discs in heaven are marked "R.C." Could R.C. in this case perhaps stand for "rank conceit"?

* * *

We have heard a lot lately about the so-called "Freedom of Religion" behind the Iron Curtain. What about some freedom for the Freethought Organizations—not controlled by government agencies?

"WHY I DO NOT BELIEVE IN GOD"

by ARTHUR G. CROMWELL

16 PAGES — 20c each, 3 for 50c

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BEGINNINGS OF EARTH AND SKY.

by Sophia L. Fahs

A practical use of ancient folklore is made by this book of stories for children about how Earth began. Now ten-year olds can learn how all peoples have wondered and satisfied themselves with tales of their own invention. There is no suggestion that anyone has been inspired with the truth by the gods.

Myths from Iceland, Japan, Greece, and other places are enchantingly told and illustrated. The Genesis story is given as a Jew's altered version of the tale he was taught in Babylon. Concepts of the Middle Ages, of Newton, and of modern science complete the book.

It is fun for parents who will help their children to learn how various peoples have been curious, none wiser than the others until speculation gave way to investigation.

—Harry Mongold

Beacon Press, $2.25

HUMANISM FOR THE MILLIONS

By Gordon Kent

This fine little pamphlet carries such a fund of good sense and logic in its 45 pages that any reader, no matter how prejudiced, will be convinced of the soundness of the doctrine of Humanism. Its very first page presents its case clearly and unmistakably with a story of Hercules and a wagoner praying for the release of his wagon where it was mired in the mud. The pamphlet cites Hercules' advice—"Get up from your knees, lazybones, whip up your oxen and put your shoulder to the wheel!" —as "pure Humanism."

Mr. Kent leads the reader from the early teaching of religion to a child, through its later and contradictory scientific studies, citing his own experiences, as well, and on through a discussion of the bible, myths, magic, gods, nature, healing, human power, and the building of a better world. He ends his excellent thesis with these ringing words:

"In America the twentieth century is the century of Humanism, a secular, democratic and moral Humanism.

"This generation is accepting the doctrine of human responsibility as no other has done. It is a humanistic generation in a humanistic civilization. It believes in human agency and leaves nothing to any god. It relies on human power and the ability of man to achieve greater power, whether physicad, mental or moral.

"It sees that all man's needs are a human responsibility and sets out to cope with them all."

If the reader knows of any one who is wavering on the brink between belief and unbelief, this is the book to put into his hands: its logic is devastating.

—Florence van Swaerengen

The American Humanist Association, Yellow Springs, Ohio, 45 pp., 50c.

THIS HUMAN NATURE

by Charles Duff

Life is a magnificent adventure. This book reaffirms one's faith in it, giving us a great many very helpful facts concerning ourselves and our world. It is a book that surveys the thrilling story of human beings from earliest times till now, a book by a gifted author who sees things with unusual objectivity.

Fire, the wheel, roads, wheat, domestic

animals — we take things like these for granted today, yet each such discovery in the dawn of our human story was momentous. These ancient things have become a very part of our civilization.

Will that civilization itself survive? Four previous great civilizations have come and gone, as Charles Duff tells us. Slavery as the first Big Business of the modern Christian capitalist world, the dull uniformity of modern life, society today having the criminals it deserves, and the super spectral squeeze of more humans and less food, all fire the imagination with a realization of the deep need for a better, happier society.

The religionist growing up learning mind-beclouding myths, placing emphasis on trifling ritual and dogma, and ignoring the supreme value of our truly wonderful human mind, can have no intelligent concept of the magnitude of societal problems.

Too often human nature is the result of poor emotions pushing and shoving human behavior. What if the mind takes over the guidance of behavior? Would human nature not then become humanist nature? "This Human Nature" seeks to help along this great forward movement.

—Gordon Caulfeild

C. A. Watts & Co., 50c

MY SIX CONVICTS

by Donald Powell Wilson

The author worked three years as psychologist in Ft. Leavenworth Prison. To help him in his research in drug addiction and criminality, he has 2,000 men to choose from — all convicts. He finally chooses six. The book, humorous as well as instructive, is the story of these six men. We are given much insight into the workings of the "criminal" minds. It is interesting to watch the changes which their personalities and even their vocabularies undergo as they learn more about psychology. Only the names of the prisoners are changed — everything else is true. From the first pages, when Wilson arrives at Leavenworth before the prison staff has been notified, we see how effective the prisoners' grapevine is, for the convicts are already expecting him, and know of his arrival.

We are given a clear description of prison life prior to the prison reforms in 1930 and after. Instead of dry facts, the data is presented in an interesting fashion by Gibbs, one of the six convicts who had an encyclopedic memory, and devoured statistics and reports.

The American prison system is compared very favorably with England's prison system. Wilson states that Britain has the lightest and shortest sentences and the fewest crimes of any civilized nation, and uses no third degree. The capital offenses in Britain have dropped to three, while in the U.S., there were still fifteen offenses carrying the death penalty in 1947. Sentences in the courts of America are the longest in the world.

Only one chapter is devoted to the religious life of the convicts. There were few atheists among them. They believed in God as they believed in the law — because they had offended it. But they wanted no traffic with either the law or God, if possible. Only in time of trouble or disaster would God, in Wilson's words, "be ordered to come running, on the double."

Whereas the Jews and Protestants held their services in a classroom, or from the bare stage in the dining room, the Catholics had their own chapel. The chaplain capitalized on the power and pageantry of the Roman Church for its appeal. The confessional was as close as most of them cared to get to God, says Wilson.

"My Six Convicts" is a book that will appeal to Rationalists because it is a study in sociology as well as a fascinating story. It makes us realize what a lot still has to be done by way of prison reform.

—Nan Mongold

Paper bound, A Pocket Book Cardinal Edition, 45c, 354 pages.

SOLOMON AND THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

by Czenzi Ormonde

Based on the Bible story of Solomon, the book reads like fiction, but is very instructive as well. We're given a good description of life as it must have been during Solomon's day. It is more than a love story of Makada, the Sheban Queen, and Solomon. It is also a wonderful character-study of the famous king. We feel Solomon's resentment when David, on his death-bed, appoints Solomon as his successor, even though Adonijah is the eldest son. We feel Solomon's sorrow, when Adonijah leaves the country with hate in his heart because he feels that he is the rightful heir. We sense Solomon's loneliness, despite his many wives, before he meets the Queen of Sheba.

We are given vivid descriptions of the Temple as the building progresses. The author tells the legendary stories of Solomon's great wisdom, and then proceeds to show the many times he erred in judgement, especially after he fell in love with the Queen of Sheba. By the discussions between Makada and Tanis, who is the daughter of a Pharaoh, and also Solomon's favorite wife, we are given a comparison of the attitude of the Egyptians toward Aton, and that of the Jews toward Jehovah.

The story is full of suspense and intrigue, and I hurried to find out how the book ended. When we leave Solomon, he is heartbroken, for he has lost both Makada and his brother Adonijah.

The book gives a person a lot of food for thought. It would be an ideal gift to a beginner in Rationalism, for it shows how the Jews progressed from idol-worshippers to the belief in Jehovah.

—NAN MONGOLD

Published by Farrar, Straus & Young
412 pages, price $3.95

IN THE COOL OF THE DAY

by W. Gordon Drake

This is a one-act play of about 10,000 words, and a really adequate comment would require at least that many more, which would of course be ridiculous.

It is a satire of high humor and a sharp cutting edge, consisting mostly of a dialogue between God and Satan in the garden of Eden, with Lilith and Gabriel making brief appearances, together with walk-ons by Eve, imps, teen-aged angels, and some others. Suave Satan seems to have the upper hand of a rather bumbling and seedy God. Startling is the scene where first Satan and then God, realized their phoniness, fall to their knees to worship a "God" whom, without understanding, they feel to be the "real McCoy."

The play is rib-tickling and deftly turned, no doubt of that, and may bring an occasional blush and embarrassed wiggle to the reader. Anyone of lively mind would do well to have this play, which reads as easily as a short novel.

—Robert Bailey

Freethought Press Ass'n, $1.10

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Subscriptions to the **"American Rationalist"** are now accepted by the following freethought magazines in the currency of their country:

"The Humanist" and **"The Freethinker"**, London, England.

"New Zealand Rationalist", New Zealand.

"Indian Rationalist" and **"The Radical Humanist"**, India.

"Verdjenker", Belgium.

"Freidenker", Switzerland.

"South - African Rationalist", Johannesburg, South Africa.

"The Rationalist", Australia.

Other magazines or organizations willing to cooperate with us will be added to this list as arrangements are completed. It is our policy to make "The American Rationalist" available all over the world where freethinkers are organized. Payment can be made in shillings, francs, rupees etc. to make it as easy as possible to become acquainted with our movement.

COOPERATION

In union there is strength.

Written especially for and read at the convention of the American Rationalist Federation held August 25th, 1957, at Philadelphia, and inspired by the devotion to the name of Thomas Paine shown by the Friendship Liberal League of Philadelphia by their establishment of the Thomas Paine Center.

"The greatest evil in the world today is the Catholic Church." So states the illustrious H. G. Wells at the end of a long life of study of history and social processes. Our greatest statesman, Thomas Jefferson, also states:

> "I have recently been examining all the known superstitions of the world, and do not find in our particular superstition (Christianity) one redeeming feature. They are all alike, founded upon fables and mythologies.
>
> "The Christian God is a being of terrific character — cruel, vindictive, capricious, and unjust."

The most noted living philosopher, Bertrand Russell, says: "I am myself a dissenter from all known religions and I hope that every kind of religious belief will die out."

Thousands of people realize that Christianity is the worst of all the prominent religions, and are cognizant of its baneful influence to humanity; however, most of those holding such opinions simply hold the opinions and do nothing about the matter. Many of them would be willing to act if they felt the moral support of their fellow men.

There are in the U.S.A. a limited number of free thinkers who are carrying on a valiant fight aganst religion. Their activities, however, are in the nature of guerilla warfare — each individual going it alone. One can only marvel at how much these lone wolves have accomplished under such conditions. Their results must be a source of considerable satisfaction to them. On the other hand, freqently they are discouraged and frustrated at not accomplishing more.

Having had considerable sucess in cooperation in the business world, I have been impelled to attempt it in the realm of human freedom. I recently wrote the following letter to the representatives of THE AMERICAN RATIONALIST, THE LIBERAL, THE AGE OF

RATIONALISM IN GHANA

by Dave Shipper

At an inaugural meeting in Koforidua on 4-8-57 the Ghana Rationalist group commenced its official existence.

Dr. G. Saunders of Kumasi was elected President, Lieut. R. B. K. Hewlett Secretary, and local secretaries were appointed for the Accra, Ashanti, Eastern and Western regions.

After adopting the Memorandum and articles of the (British) Rationalist Press Association it was decided to modify them to suit Ghana conditions.

Opening discussion at the morning session of the conference, Lt. Hewlett stated the objects of the Association: — 1. To encourage a rational approach to human problems. 2. To promote the maximum use of science for human welfare and; 3. To defend freedom of thought and civil liberties. — and stated that the immediate task o the group would be to "create in the public mind doubts about religious belief and superstition.

The President, Dr. Saunders, maintained that "Ghana owes a deep debt of gratitude to the missions" and that at present the group "must not be taken as violently anti-anything to the point of arousing hostility against ourselves." It was decided to initiate an aggressive policy to aid a membership drive and to encourage booksellers to sell rationalist literature.

Sympathetic masters in colleges will be approached, as it is felt that colleges are a fertile field for recruitment.

A members' library will be organised from Koforidua, a useful service for outlying members. The conference decided that propaganda work could take the following forms: 1. Lectures; 2. Radio broadcasts; 3. Letters in the local press.

Suggested topics were rationalist views on libation, local customs, etc.

ACCRA secretary, Mr. K. Y. Attoh was requested to contact the local broadcasting authorities

with a view to arranging the participation of members in the very popular "Seconds Out" programme.

During the afternoon session Dr. Saunders lectured on "The Ethical Value of Materialism" and Lieut. Hewlett on "Humanism and God." It is refreshing to see a new group in a new country embarking on an ambitious and active programme.

I am sure American rationalists will join me in wishing them every success.

•

WON'T GIVE TIME FOR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTIONS

Biloxi, Miss., (AP) — The Biloxi School Board refused to allow Roman Catholic students to leave elementary schools an hour each week for religious instruction.

The request had been made by the Rev. Herbert Mullin, pastor of St. Michael's Catholic Church. It was opposed by the Biloxi ministerial Ass'n.

The school board met in closed session for 20 minutes, then opened the meeting and voted on the request. It was turned down by a 3-2 vote.

Father Mullin asked that the children be released 30 minutes ahead of the regular school close twice a week.

The Rev. Tuten, a Baptist minister; the Rev. Victor Augsburger, a Presbyterian minister; and the Rev. E. A. DeMiller, an Episcopal minister, spoke for the ministerial association.

Rev. Tuten said the home and not the school should be involved in moral instruction. He said a released time system would emphasize to children that a division of faiths exist in the schools and would indirectly involve public schools in denominational instruction.

The school board's action marked the second time it has turned down Father Mullin's request for released time.

•

If we strive not so much to make heaven our home as to make our homes a heaven on earth we should do better.—Andrew Carnegie.

REASON, THE PROGRESSIVE WORLD, and THE TRUTH SEEKER:

"As you are aware, there exist in this country a half dozen or more freethought organizations, each with a limited following, each doing good work, each with an able leader — though unfortunately some of these leaders are somewhat advanced in years — each publishing a creditable journal, each selling freethought books and pamphlets, and each paying taxes. Also each is receiving gifts for furtherance of their educational work, but upon which gifts the donors pay taxes, differing thus from the donors to churches.

"Now it would seem to me that something is wrong with the leaders of these various groups, notwithstanding the fact that they are all quite capable men. They are all motivated by the same high ideals and think as one in regard to the chief handicap confronting humanity in its educational and cultural progress.

"I also feel quite certain that each of these groups could accomplish more with additional financial support. I further believe that added financial support would be forthcoming if such donations could be written off in tax reports.

"In other words, it is apparent that some cooperation and coordination is needed in this freethought movement.

"Permit a couple of illustrations:

"Joseph Lewis is at present publicly calling attention to the folly and futility of Billy Graham's antics. But Lewis, so far as I know, is carrying the ball alone. No one is giving him any help — not even a cheer.

"Again, recently Charles Smith appeared before a Senate Committee in Washington when it had under consideration a Catholic for the Supreme Court. If any of the rest of you gave Smith any aid, the public did not know it. He did a lot of good, yet if any mention was made of it in your publication, I did not see it — and I subscribe for all of them.

"Now this is an anomalous situation — very like Christians. Pardon me if I seem too uncomplimentary. However, should we not have at least a central clearing house of some nature and some show of cooperation?

"I would appreciate an expression from each of you on this matter."

Four of the five favored me with a reply, virtually all of whom realize the need, though some are apparently pessimistic of results. One states:

"I agree with you that all are capable men trying to do what each thinks best for the movement. I also agree that with additional support more could be done. "———————— is a lone wolf type operator."

"Mr. ————————, who is really the dictator of that organization takes an attitude exactly like that of the Pope on the unity of the various Christian sects. Unity can be achieved, says His Holiness, by everybody submitting to me."

Another feels hurt from attacks made upon him. One can naturally appreciate his feelings in regard to these uncalled-for attacks and can understand his attitude. Stiill another observes that his experience leads him to think efforts "to get Freethought societies to form one big union are futile."

One can sympathize with all these viewpoints. They are the usual alibis one invariably gets in trying to secure cooperation; however, these personal affronts, discourtesies and even insults can readily be overlooked by men of the calibre of those in the forefront of a great moral cause. The battle is too important, the outcome too serions to allow personalities to interfere. There is simply too much at stake for me to hang back because a comrade in the cause has a bad opinion of me. He may call me all the ugly names in the catalog; I'll overlook them if he'll go along and help win this great battle.

It is not essential that "one big union" be formed, or that the various leaders must frequently meet and fraternize. An understanding can be had that when a critical situation arises, e.g. the appointment of a seventh Roman Catholic Attorney General, another brazen hand-out to the Pope, the discharge of a competent public official because he doesn't believe in Hell and Holy Water, or an attempt made to substitute the "virgin" for Jefferson on postage, requiring observance of religious holidays, exemptions from taxation in the name of a god, free rides for an illegitimate agent of an illegitimate god, etc., etc., etc., the skinning of the skunk will not be left to one or two. Instead, the matter will have united attention, vigorous, unrelenting attention, until the beast is disposed of and his skin nailed to the church door.

We are confronted with a tough problem. However, history teaches us that "the greater the challenge, the greater the stimulus." We must meet it.

In the near future there will be held several conventions of liberal organizations. May I suggest that this matter be placed on the docket of each. "Now is the accepted time."

Respectfully,

IRA D. CARDIFF

A meeting of the American Rationalist Federation adjourned to this statue of the great poet-philosopher, Friedrich von Schiller, in St. Louis and placed a wreath in recognition of his contribution to the cause of Rationalism.

•

FIND BRITISH CLERGYMEN IN IN POVERTY

Report Children Often Go Hungry

London — Some British clergymen are so poor their children go hungry, a survey among the nation's preachers discloses.

The Rev. Nathaniel Micklem, former principal of Mansfield College, made the survey.

HE reports:

—One minister's wife hadn't been able to buy a winter coat for twelve years.

—Another has been unable to buy coats for his teen-age boys since they were only babies

—"Our children are not adequately fed," answered another preacher, "and often rise from the table actually hungry."

The report covers clergymen of the Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian and Congregational denominations as well as the Church of England.

Chicago's "I Will" Spirit Sparks Its Rationalists

The separate Rationalist groups in the Chicago Area are forming an organization which will be known as "The Rationalist Society of Greater Chicago". This is very good news. For a long time we have had dreams that someday such a group would be formed to unite Rationalist thinking in the Chicago area and provide a solid front to fight conformity. This group has drawn up By-Laws and will start organizing within the next few weeks. This Society will be an official branch of the "American Rationalist Federation". The purpose of this group will be to organize the separate Rationalist groups at a top-level basis. By being so organized, "The Rationalist Society of Greater Chicago", will be able to provide communication between the groups and disseminate Rationalist literature. With this organization the Rationalists will have force and a voice in Chicago's public affairs. There is tremendous enthusiasm for this organization and it is bringing some new faces into the Rationalist movement. As time goes on we will hear more and more about "The Rationalist Society of Greater Chicago". Write to Rationalist Society of Greater Chicago, P.O. Box 7709, Chicago, Illinois.

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EPISCOPAL HUMOR

The Parish Bulletin of Christ Church, Vicksburg, Miss., included this item: "The rector of St. Delusia's was discouraged. He was talking to the bishop concerning the situation in his parish which was distressing to him and to many. He said, 'We really try to approach all our differences in a spirit of kindliness and brotherly love looking always for divine guidance.' 'And what happens?' asked the bishop. 'Nothing,' said the rector of St. Delusia's.

•

John Adams: "This would be the best of all possible worlds if there were no religion in it."

"quotus

from the Freethought publications of the world

from LA VOZ DE JUAREZ (Mexico):

Cautious Query—Senores of the Voz de Juarez, could you inform me to what order these women dressed in black belong? We see them in the streets, public offices, markets, and even in cantinas and cabarets, soliciting money. For whom is this money collected? By what authority do they beg? Answer: Perhaps they belong to some court of miracles, or are Amazons in the army of Roman spies. Our Mexican constitution prohibits religious and other orders functioning thus, on the basis that such goings-on are contrary to national security. They are not legally authorized to be parasites upon society.

from RUDSCHREIBEN
(Freidenkerbund Oesterreichs, Austria):

The battle for the Concordat in Austria has begun. Until recently progress could not be made because the Church demanded too much. It appears now as if the hierarchy has given up the idea of clericalizing the state-supported public schools. But we freethinkers will be vigilant and do our duty.

from DER FREIDENKER (Germany):

When 2000 people in West Germany were asked whether they believed in any life after death 42% answered "Yes," 35% "No," while 23% "did not know." Since a total of 96.4% (51.2% Protestant, 45.2% Catholic) of the population has religious affiliation according to the 1950 census, it seems that not even half of them take the teachings of their church serious.

from INFORMATIONSDIENST
(Deutscher Volksbund fuer Geistesfreiheit, Germany):

The travel agencies may hang out the "Welcome" sign for tourists but those self-appointed guardians of religion and morals in the Tyrols complain that "Tens of thousands of tourists with anti-Christian tendencies come to us during the summer months. Among them are many skeptics who believe that they can live a life here without inhibitions. Fanatic haters of God are our guests who prepare the way for a godless existence."

from THE FREETHINKER (England):

By the very definition of terms the supernatural cannot exist since existence implies the known (to talk of an unknowable existing is to talk nonsense) and that which is known must be included within the sphere of science.

from PROGRESSIVE WORLD:

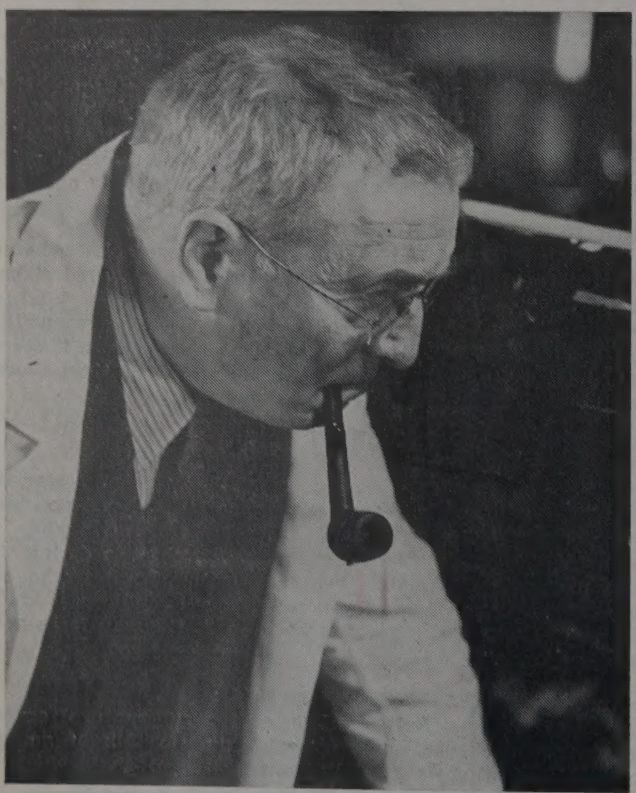
True Secularism, while denying all supernaturalism and religious orthodoxy with its gods, heavens, hells, and fantastic schemes of salvation, is something far more than a mere negation of three superstitions. It is a positive affirmation of life and everything that contributes to the making of a good life in a good society here on the good earth.

THOUGHTS.

T'is also true, they take control in what we say and do.
T's also true, they take control in what we say and do.
As thoughts come into consciousness, we do not them create;
Yet they make us what we become, favored or not by fate.
When we assume that we are free to cast a thought aside,
T'is only by another thought, that we may so decide.
If we the Truth sincerely seek, T'is well to keep in view:—
"Together reason! All things prove!
Hold fast the Good and True!"

—C. E. Ratcliffe.

Science and the Supernatural



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